

it would have been welcome and, in some sort, comforting reading, had La Boetie only had the courage to send it to the printer. It was written in 1548; it was not published until 1578, long after its author's decease, for the promise of a brilliant career was cut short by a premature death. His death was the great sorrow of Montaigne's life. The friendship of these two men is a singular fact. There is a vast contrast between the passionate enthusiast for liberty, justice, equality, and the sceptical egoist, who was one of the greatest essayists, but assuredly no ardent theorist or reformer. It is impossible to imagine Montaigne growing enthusiastic for an idea, if the idea involved the slightest disturbance of his surroundings. How much less enthusiastic for a revolution. How he must have smiled sardonically and shrugged his shoulders at this passionate protest against the course of things! And yet the author of the "Discourse on Voluntary Servitude" was the most sympathetic man that Montaigne had met, the man whose death he mourned to the end of his days. Strange and subtle affinity of contraries, whose attraction he has touchingly expressed. "It was because it was he; it was because it was I." Otherwise, Montaigne had no love of theorists, eschewed politics, and had a horror of revolutions as equally ruinous to the State and to their authors. He was a staunch royalist, though not a courtier, condemned in fact courtly arts as incompatible with independence and honesty. He would have liberty to think and write, and was a forerunner of Descartes in advocating independence of thought. Take nothing on trust, but form an independent judgment, was with him a maxim. Nature was for him, as for La Boetie and Rousseau, the great teacher. "The great world is the mirror in which we must look." Aristotle and mere bookish knowledge are of far less account than knowledge of men and things. Inquire of all men, and learn from the workman, the cowherd, the casual traveller. Learn, too, from history, and seek to know especially the reasons of events rather than the events themselves; not the place where Manlius died, but rather why it was a breach of duty for him to have died there. The faculty to judge historical fact is superior to the mere knowledge of such fact. The grand aim of

education is to enable the pupil " to taste,
choose, and discriminate things for